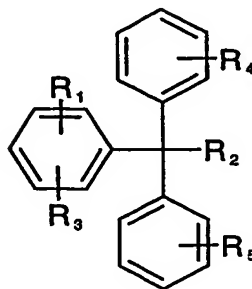


Claims

1. A process for preparing a compound of formula I



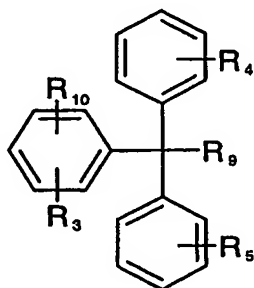
wherein  $R_1$  is a reactive substituent or an attachment to a solid phase;

$R_2$  is a reactive substituent; and

$R_3$ ,  $R_4$  and  $R_5$  are each independently hydrogen or one or more substituents attached to each benzene ring and selected from hydroxy, amino,  $C_{1-10}$ -alkyl,  $C_{1-10}$ -alkoxy,  $C_{1-10}$ -alkylamino, di- $C_{1-10}$ -alkylamino, carbamoyl,  $C_{1-10}$ -alkylcarbamoyl, di- $C_{1-10}$ -alkylcarbamoyl, halo- $C_{1-10}$ -alkyl, halogeno and nitro;

in free or salt form; comprising

- (a) reacting a compound of formula VI with an electrophile:



VI

wherein  $R_3$ ,  $R_4$  and  $R_5$  are as defined above;

$R_9$  is  $-OH$ ,  $-OM$  or  $-OMX$ , where  $M$  is metal and  $X$  is a nucleophilic substituent;

$R_{10}$  is  $-M$  or  $-MX$ , where  $M$  is metal and  $X$  is a nucleophilic substituent;

in free or salt form;

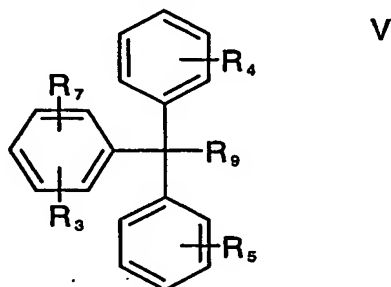
and hydrolyzing the resulting compound to form a compound of formula I wherein  $R_2$  is hydroxy;

- (b) optionally converting a compound of formula I wherein  $R_2$  is hydroxy to a compound of formula I wherein  $R_2$  is other than hydroxy;

- (c) optionally converting  $R_1$  in a compound of formula I to an alternative  $R_1$  group;

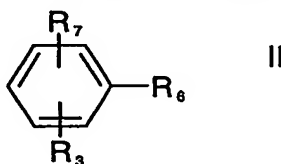
- (d) optionally deprotecting a compound of formula I in protected form; and  
 (e) where required, converting a compound of formula I obtained in free form into the desired salt form, or vice versa.

2. A process according to claim 1, wherein compound of formula VI is prepared by reacting a compound of formula V with a metal or organometallic compound:



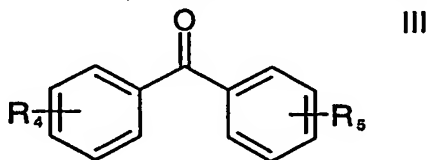
wherein  $R_3$ ,  $R_4$ ,  $R_5$  and  $R_9$  are as defined above; and  
 $R_7$  is a nucleophilic substituent.

3. A process according to claim 2, wherein the compound of formula V is prepared by:  
 (i) reacting a compound of formula II with a metal or organometallic compound



wherein  $R_6$  and  $R_7$  are each a nucleophilic substituent and  $R_3$  is as defined above and is protected if necessary by a removable protecting group; and

(ii) reacting the compound obtained in (i) with a compound of formula III

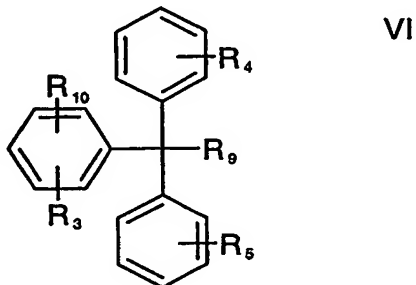


wherein  $R_4$  and  $R_5$  are as defined above and are protected if necessary by a removable protecting group.

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4. A process for the preparation of a solid phase support system, comprising preparing a compound of formula I by a process as defined in any of claims 1 to 3, and coupling the compound with a suitably derivatised or functionalised solid phase material.

5. A compound of formula VI in free or salt form

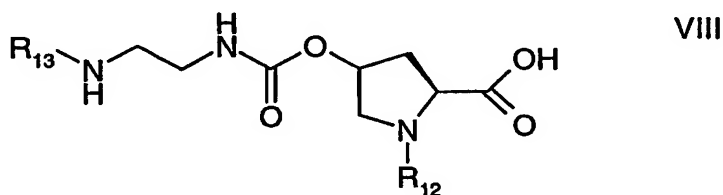


wherein  $R_3$ ,  $R_4$  and  $R_5$  are each independently hydrogen or one or more substituents attached to each benzene ring, and are selected from hydroxy, amino,  $C_{1-10}$ -alkyl,  $C_{1-10}$ -alkoxy,  $C_{1-10}$ -alkylamino, di- $C_{1-10}$ -alkylamino, carbamoyl,  $C_{1-10}$ -alkylcarbamoyl, di- $C_{1-10}$ -alkylcarbamoyl, halo- $C_{1-10}$ -alkyl, halogeno or nitro, optionally protected by a removable protecting group;

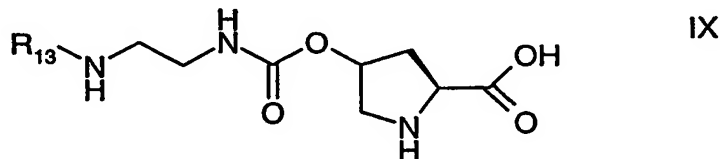
$R_9$  is  $-OH$ ,  $-OM$  or  $-OMX$ , where  $M$  is metal and  $X$  is a nucleophilic substituent; and

$R_{10}$  is  $-M$  or  $-MX$ , where  $M$  is metal and  $X$  is a nucleophilic substituent.

6. A process for preparing a compound of formula VIII

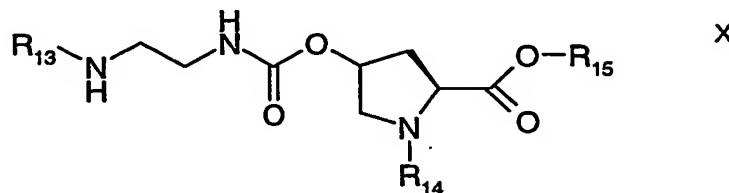


wherein  $R_{12}$  and  $R_{13}$  are each a removable protecting group and  $R_{12}$  and  $R_{13}$  are different; comprising reacting a compound of formula IX



with a suitable  $R_{12}$  donor compound.

7. A process according to claim 6, wherein the compound of formula IX is prepared by  
(i) hydrolysing a compound of formula X



wherein  $R_{13}$  is as defined in claim 6,

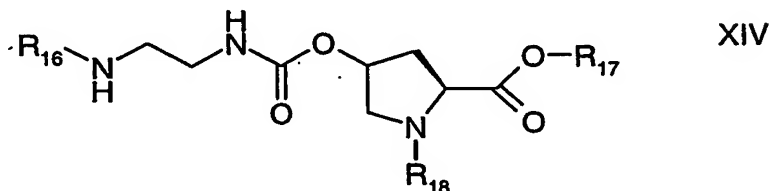
$R_{14}$  is a removable protecting group and  $R_{14}$  is different to  $R_{12}$  and  $R_{13}$ , and

$R_{15}$  is a blocking group removable by hydrolysis or hydrogenolysis,

to obtain the corresponding carboxylic acid, and

- (ii) removing the protecting group  $R_{14}$  in the resulting carboxylic acid.

8. A compound of formula XIV



wherein  $R_{16}$  is a removable protecting group other than fluorenylmethoxycarbonyl, and is different to  $R_{18}$ ;

$R_{17}$  is hydrogen or a blocking group removable by hydrolysis or hydrogenolysis; and

$R_{18}$  is hydrogen or a removable protecting group other than fluorenylmethoxycarbonyl.

9. A compound according to claim 8, wherein  $R_{16}$  is tert-butoxycarbonyl.

10. A process for producing a compound of formula VIII as defined in claim 6, wherein  $R_{12}$  is fluorenylmethoxycarbonyl and  $R_{13}$  is a removable protecting group other than fluorenylmethoxycarbonyl, comprising reacting a compound of formula IX with a fluorenylmethoxycarbonyl donor compound.